

Comments on Petitions
Regarding Changes in Morse Code Testing Requirements for Amateur Radio Licenses

Sirs:

I want to register my **opposition** to proposals for reducing or eliminating Morse code requirements for US amateur radio licenses.

Observation of the amateur bands will show that CW is still a widely used mode among United States amateurs. It is my belief that those that have applied themselves and studied to learn the mere 5 wpm code requirement have proven a true dedication and sincerity to the amateur service. I further believe that it is within just about anyone's ability to learn this low level of the CW skill and the current licensing exceptions cover any exceptions to this well. I believe the people that have applied themselves and learned CW can be trusted to "safely" carry the service forward respectfully without it getting out of control like citizens band radio did in the early 1980's.

People will argue that otherwise good operators are being kept off the bands because of their inability to learn CW. Aside from the "inability to learn" part not being true, these people are not kept off the bands. They are given a set of permissions relative to what license and skill set they hold. They do have some access to amateur radio frequencies without demonstrating morse code proficiency. I maintain that these requests are just people who want everything for free and aren't willing to work for it.

Some should say we should "follow the rest of the world" in eliminating morse code requirements. Remember, the United States is one of the largest nations and should be seen as a leader, not a follower. We also have many more potential radio operators to control and regulate than many of the countries who are eliminating the morse requirements. We also have the testing infrastructure already in place and working for this testing, while other countries lack the ability to do this well.

CW transmission is a simple and highly effective method of communication that amateur radio operators should continue to learn and be proficient in considering we are one of our nations last levels of communication in times of disaster and emergency. We've already reduced the requirement down to 5 wpm making it so easy for people to maintain the skill yet not abandon it. Let's not abandon the skill that has identified us, served us and continues to serve us so well and open up all of amateur radio to people who can memorize questions and answers from a book or a website.

Signed:

Tom Brown, W2EQ

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